

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 224838

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO AMMAN BEIRUT, BERN,  
BONN, KHARTOUM, KUWAIT, LONDON, PARIS, RABAT,ROME, SANAA,  
TEL AVIV, TRIPOLI, TUNIS, USUN NEW YORK, CINCEUR  
FROM ALGIERS NOV 12.

QUOTE ALGIERS 2368.

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: FPRO, AG, XF

SUBJ: ALGERIAN POSITION RE MB NEGOTIATIONS

1. SUMMARY: ALGERIA'S ATTITUDE TOWARD ME PEACE SETTLEMENT  
IS GOVERNED BY TWO OCCASIONALLY CONFLICTING LINES OF  
REASON. IDEOLOGICALLY AND ON BASIS ITS OWN REVOLUTIONARY  
EXPERIENCE WITH FRANCE, ALGERIA WAS PREPARED TO SUPPORT  
ARAB COMBATTANTS IN A PROLONGED WAR. PRAGMATICALLY ALGERIA  
WOULD ACCEPT WHATEVER ME SETTLEMENT IS ACCEPTABLE  
TO SYRIANS, EGYPTIANS AND ESPECIALLY PALESTINIANS. IN  
SHORT TERM, ALGERIA WANTS TO PARTICIPATE IN NEXT STEPS  
IN ME AND IS THUS PROMOTING OAU MEETING IN ADDIS NEXT  
WEEK AND ARAB SUMMIT IN ALGIERS, WHICH COULD HINDER  
AMERICAN DIPLOMACY. IN LONG RUN, HOWEVER, ALGERIA  
APPEARS TO WANT ARAB-ISRAELI SETTLEMENT. END SUMMARY

2. ALGERIA HAS PUBLICLY PROMOTED THE AFRICAN FONMINS  
MEETING SCHEDULED TO OPEN IN ADDIS ABABA NOV. 19 AND IS  
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PRIVATELY PRESSING FOR AN ARAB SUMMIT IN ALGIERS THIS

MONTH. THESE INITIATIVES HAVE STIMULATED SPECULATION IN ALGERIA AND ELSEWHERE IN ARAB WORLD RE ALGERIA'S INTENTIONS. LOCAL OBSERVERS, EXPRESSING DIFFERING

VIEWS, AND ALGERIAN OFFICIAL STATEMENTS AND MEDIA HAVE NOT PROVIDED MUCH INSIGHT. BRITISH, FRENCH AND OTHER WESTERN AMBASSADORS HERE TEND TO EMPHASIZE PRAGMATIC, REALISTIC AND EVEN MODERATE ASPECTS OF ALGERIAN POLICY. WE BELIEVE THESE TERMS SHOULD BE USED WITH QUALIFICATION THAT TAKE IN CONSIDERATION UNCOMPROMISING AND SOMETIMES EXTREMIST ASPECTS OF THE ALGERIAN CHARACTER.

3. ALGERIAN POLICY IS MADE BY PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE AND HIS IMMEDIATE ASSOCIATES. MY READING OF HIS VIEWS COMES LARGELY FROM LENGTHY DISCUSSIONS WITH DEPSEC GEN PRESIDENCY HAMDANI AND A PRIVATE MEMBER OF BOUMEDIENE'S INNER CIRCLE. BOUMEDIENE WAS OBVIOUSLY UNHAPPY THAT ALGERIA WAS BYPASSED BY ARAB MILITARY PLANNING, THE CEASEFIRE, THE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO THE MIDDLE EAST, AND QUALIFIED RENEWAL OF US-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS. WHILE RELUCTANT TO DELAY THEIR AMBITIOUS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OR COMMIT THEIR ARMED FORCES TO A WAR WITH LIMITED GOALS, ALGERIA'S LEADERS, BEFORE CEASEFIRE, WERE PREPARED TO GO ALL THE WAY WITH COMBATANTS.

4. BOUMEDIENE'S THEORETICAL POSITION, BASED ON ALGERIAN EXPERIENCE IN WAR AND NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE, HAS BEEN THAT WITH ALL ARAB FORCES ENGAGED IN BATTLE, A CEASE FIRE SHOULD TAKE PLACE AFTER, AND NOT BEFORE, NEGOTIATIONS. THOUGHT THIS OVERLOOKS LIKELIHOOD THAT EGYPTIAN AND SYRIAN ARMIES WOULD HAVE BEEN DESTROYED, ALGERIAN REPLY IS THAT IT WOULD MAKE NO DIFFERENCE IF CAIRO AND DAMASCUS WERE OCCUPIED SINCE WAR WOULD CONTINUE AND ISRAELIS WOULD BE INCAPABLE OF OCCUPYING AND POLICY ENTIRE ARAB WORLD.

5. WHILE ALGERIAN LEADERS SERIOUSLY HOLD THESE THEORETICAL VIEWS, THEY CONCURRENTLY PURSUE QUITE SEPARATE GOALS BASED ON PRINCIPLE THAT ALGERIA WILL SUPPORT WHATEVER SETTLEMENT IS ACCEPTABLE TO PARTIES DIRECTLY

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CONCERNED: EGYPT, SYRIA AND JORDAN-PALESTINAIANS. THIS MORE PRACTICAL ASPECT OF THEIR POLICY IS REINFORCED BY THEIR DESIRE TO PLAY LEADING ROLE IN AFRICA AND AMONG NON-ALIGNED WHERE MODERATE ELEMENTS HAVE A VOICE. FURTHERMORE, ALGERIAN LEADERS GENUINELY DESIRE A PEACE WHICH WOULD AVOID PERIODIC THREATS TO THEIR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

6. ALGERIA'S GOALS: ALGERIA IS NOW SEEKING A ROLE DURING ME NEGOTIATIONS WHICH SHE DEEMS WORTHY OF HER RELATIVE STRENGTH IN ARAB, MEDITERRANEAN AND THIRD WORLDS. BOUMEIENE WISHES TO RALLY AFRICA AT ADDIS AND FORGE A UNIFIED ARAB APPROACH TO NEGOTIATIONS AT AN ALGEIERS SUMMIT. HE WILL WANT TO ENSURE THAT "NATIONAL RIGHTS" OF PALESTINIANS ARE NOT SCARIFIED, BUT HE WILL LOOK TO THE PALESTINIANS TO DEFINE THOSE RIGHTS AND PROBABLY WOULD INJECT AN ELEMENT OF REALISM INTO PALESTINAIN DELIBERATIONS. ALGERIAN LEADERS WILL AVOID ASSOCIATION WITH ARAB BLOCS AND INSTEAD WILL PLAY AN INDEPENDENT ROLE WITHIN A UNIFIED ARAB EFFORT.

7. CONCLUSIONS: ALGERIA'S DIPLOMACY WILL NOT BE HELPFUL TO OUR EFFORTS TO ENGAGE MODERATE ARABS (EGYPT TO BEGIN WITH) IN NEGOTIATING PROCESS ISOLATED FROM THEIR MORE RADICAL COLLEAGUES. NEVERTHELESS, ALGERIA'S EXTREMIST IDEOLOGICAL POSITION WILL PROBABLY BE KEPT IN THE BACKGROUND. WHILE MORE PRACTICAL EFFORTS ARE EMPLOYED TO ENLIST EUROPEAN AND NON-ALIGNED SUPPORT FOR A SOLUTION BASED ON RES. 242 PLUS GUARANTEES FOR "PALESTINIAN RIGHTS" WHICH ALGERIANS BELIEVE CAN BE APPROACHED THROUGH UN RESOLUTIONS CALLING FOR RETURN OR COMPENSATION. THUS, WHILE IT WOULD BE EASIER TO ACHIEVE AN ARAB-ISRAELI SETTLEMENT IF ALGERIA AND SEVERAL OTHER ARAB STATES WERE OUT OF PICTURE, WE DO NOT BELIEVE ALGERIA WILL OPPOSE A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO TERRITORIAL DISPUTE. THE WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, CONSIDER ANY SETTLEMENT FINAL THAT WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO "PALESTINIAN PEOPLE".  
EAGLETON UNQUOTE RUSH

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